REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 to 6 and 8 to 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Manley et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,186,443, in view of Brooke et al., Great Britain Patent No. 2,032,889.

Claim 7 was objected to, but was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1, 5 to 7 and 13 were amended. Claims 16 and 17 are new. Claim 12 was canceled. Support for new claim 16 may be found in the specification at, for example, paragraph [0010]. Support for new claim 17 may be found in the claims at, for example, original claim 7.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claim 7 was objected to, but was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 17 has been added and corresponds to original claim 7 written in independent form.

Withdrawal of the objection to claim 7 is respectfully requested in view of the following.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejections

Claims 1 to 6 and 8 to 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Manley et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,186,443, in view of Brooke et al., Great Britain Patent No. 2,032,889.

Manley et al. shows a pocket newspaper collator. As a pocket 56 opens, a newspaper 28 is delivered by being dropped from the pocket downwardly to the gripper conveyor assembly 32 (Figs. 7-10). See col. 3, lines 54 to 56.

Brooke et al. shows a sheet stacking apparatus. "In order to reduce the effects of friction and electrostatic drag between the stack and the support surface 102 during set ejection, the latter is perforated with an array of apertures 121 through which, during set ejection, air is blown from plenum 122 supplied with air under pressure through line 123." See page 3, lines 105 to 110.

Claim 1, as amended, recites a sheet material conveyor comprising:

a pocket conveyor with at least one moving pocket for collecting printed sheet material, the pocket conveyor having a release area for releasing the printing sheet material in the pocket; and

an air supply device providing air to the pocket at the release area, the air supply device including an air source, the pocket being moveable with respect to the air source.

Neither Manley et al. nor Brooke et al. show or teach an "an air supply device providing air to the pocket at the release area, the air supply device including an air source, the pocket being movable with respect to the air source" as claimed in the present application. The registration fences 104, 105 in Brooke et al. are stationary. There is no reason or teaching in Manley et al. or Brooke et al. to provide an air supply device to a moving pocket.

It is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to combine the sheet stacking apparatus of Brooke et al. with the movable pocket device of Manley et al.

Withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1 to 6 and 8 to 15 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

The present application is respectfully submitted as being in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

Respectfully submitted,
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